No.E.479/51 Dated 10th May 1951.

Notes of Inspection of the Land Reclamation Scheme Hynd on the 27th April 1951. by Sir. S.U. Ramamenthy. I.C.S

.....

The scheme was started about 1948 when I was Advisor to the Government of Madras. It has made considerable progress since. There are about 1500 ex-soldiers, 400 local residents and 250 aborginals who have settled in the scheme. Each gets five acres of dry land and two acres of wet land. The ex-soldiers are given Rs.1900/- each as a gift from the Soldier's Fund. Of this Rs.700/- is earmarked for land ~~re-~~ reclamation, Rs.350/- for domestic needs (or which Rs.250/- is given in the first year and Rs.100/- is the next year) Rs.500/- for agricultural operations, Rs.250 for house construction and Rs.100/- for miscellaneous purposes. The intention of the scheme is to form a co-operative society of the settlers. This has not yet been started but is expected to be in the near future. The question whether Rs.1900/- given to each soldier ~~will be given a patta for his land on certain condition~~ has to be returned by him to the Co-operative society when it is started and invested in his name is, I understand, under consideration. When such a return is made, the intention is that each soldier will be given a patta for his land on certain conditions such as that he can sell the land only to members of the Co-operative society and that only one member of the family can succeed to the land at a time. The scheme is in charge of an Administrative Officer who deals with the revenue aspects and with the distribution of the money available whether as gift or as loan. An Agricultural Officer is in charge of the research and demonstration farm at Ambalavayal as well as agricultural aspects of the colony. A Health Officer looks after the anti-malarial measures; an Engineer looks after the construction of roads and other engineering works. There is an Advisory Board presided over by the Collector in which the principal officers and non-officials are members.

2. So far, Rs.40 lakhs have been spent on the scheme. There are some 26 miles of road constructed around the colony. When timber is felled to clear a settler's land, the timber is sold by the Administrative Officer and the proceeds credited to the Government. Besides the paddy cultivated on wet land, dry paddy is also cultivated on the dry land which also takes crops of tapioca, ginger chillies and portions are grown with coffee and oranges. First crop of paddy yield about 2000 lbs. and second crop dry paddy yields about 1000 lbs. per acres. I found that 40 cents, of ginger gave a return of Rs.400/-. The income from each settler's land is on the ~~new~~ average Rs.2000/- and it may rise to Rs.3000/- a year.

3. There are two needs of the settlers which require to be met if the scheme is to realise the success which it certainly can. The allotment of Rs.500/- for agricultural operations in a year is felt to be inadequate. Another Rs.500/- is estimated to be needed for agricultural operations such as purchase of seed and manure, cultivation of land and making it ready for raising crops. If Rs.1000/- is allotted for agricultural operations, this will be recovered from the crop and it will be available from year to year for the same purpose. The total area in the settlement so far occupied is about 15000/- acres. The area thus come under the definition of an intensive cultivation area for purpose of receiving assistance under the G.M.F Scheme. On the average two acres of paddy and two acres of tapioca or other food crop may be taken to yield food in each settlers area so that some thing like four acres of food yielding an equivalent of roughly two tons of food is contributed by each settler to the total effort of the scheme. It seems to me work examining by the Commissioner of food production, Madras whether an additional sum of Rs.500/- for Agricultural operation may be provided for each settler, half being provided by the Government of Madras and half by the Government of India under the G.M.F Scheme. This assistance from the Government of India comes to roughly Rs.125/- for a ton of food. Unless the facilities given to a colonist are fully adequate the great effort and expense that have been spent on the scheme will not yield complete results. The principal followed in the land reclamation work done Around Rome under Mussolini was that to get a thing done, cent percent effort should be made. It was said that "the hundredth solda makes a lira". It seems to me eminently worth while to give an additional Rs.500/- whether as gift or as loan to each set ler to supplement the Rs.500/- given as at present for Agriculturale operations.

(P.T.O)

4. I understand that the actual economics of the cost of cultivatio of a 7 acres plot of which 5 acres are dry and 2 acres are wet are being worked out by the Superintendent of the Agricultural Farm, but the result need not be awaited as they will take nearly a year before additional assistance is on that basis given to the settlers for agricultural operations.

5. It was represented to me that the giving of Rs.350/- for domestic needs in two years is inadequate. It is not in every case that the land yields enough of a crop for subsistance by the end of one year only as sometimes the reclamation of the land is difficult and takes time. It is worthwhile to give Rs.350/- allotted for domestic needs, in the first year itself and provide an additional sum for the second year to be ~~invest~~ given at the discretion of the Administrative Officer in cases where the land in the first year has not given enough for subsistance in the second year.

6. There is one other matter which requires consideration. I found that tapioca cultivation in land unprotected against wild pigs was a failure, but where a settler's allotment was protected by a trench 2½ feet wide and 2' deep with a split bamboo fence on the inside 4' high the wild pigs were effectively kept off. Tapioca grows well in the area yielding up to five tons per acre. Tapioca is purchased by merchants from Malabar on the spot at Rs.140/- a ton. It is thus a food crop with large commercial value. To provide such a trench and fence costs Rs.25/- per Settler's area. It seems to me eminently worthwhile to assist each settler to put up such a trench and fence and the cost of this is stated to be Rs.250 per settler. This method to keep off wild pigs is valuable and the settler should be assisted to protect his crops by this method. I suggest this matter for the consideration of the Food Production.

7. I am glad to see that the Agricultural Farm is being developed in a way which will assist settlers in the area besides demonstrating on a mass scale the possibilities of cultivation of different crops and fruits in the area.

Sd/.....
S.V.Rama Murthy,
Regional Agricultural Production
Commissioner, Madras

/True Copy/

Administrative Officer.